

AFRICAN-AMERICAN HISTORY MONTH

February 2006

Originally established as Negro History Week in 1926 by Dr. Carter G. Woodson, a noted African-American author and scholar, this event evolved into the establishment in 1976 of February as "Black History Month." This commemoration has increasingly been referred to as "African-American History Month," although both names are currently in use.

Since 1926, The Association for the Study of Afro-American Life and History (ASALH) has established the national theme for the month-long celebration of African American History Month. The National Theme for the celebration of Black History Month in the year 2006 is **"Celebrating Community: A Tribute to Black Fraternal, Social, and Civic Institutions."**

U.S. Department of State

Rosa Parks 1913-2005



On December 1, 1955, African-American seamstress Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on a segregated Montgomery, Alabama, bus and subsequently was fined and jailed.

In the words of President George W. Bush, this "show of defiance was an act of personal courage that moved millions" and an example that "helped touch off the civil rights movement and transformed America for the better." In 1996, when President Bill Clinton awarded Rosa Parks the Presidential Medal of Freedom, he declared that Parks had "ignited the single most significant social movement in American history."

The "Mother of the Civil Rights Movement" died of natural causes on October 24 at her home in Detroit. She was 92 years old.

U.S. Department of State

Did you know?

As of July 1, 2004, the estimated population of black residents in the United States, including those of more than one race, was 39.2 million. They made up 13.4 percent of the total U.S. population. This figure represents an increase of half a million residents from one year earlier.

Among blacks age 25 and older, 81 % had at least a high school diploma in 2004. This proportion rose by 8 percentage points from 1994 to 2004.

9.1 million: the number of black families in the United States. Of these, nearly one-half (47 percent) are married-couple families.

27%: the percentage of blacks age 16 and older who work in management, professional and related occupations. There are 50,600 black physicians and surgeons; 69,400 postsecondary teachers; 44,800 lawyers; and 53,800 chief executives.

U.S. Census Bureau

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For a listing of Internet resources, please log on to
<http://www.usembassy.fi/arc/webalert.htm>

The African-American History Month Web Alert includes selected Internet links for civil rights movement, Martin Luther King, Jr., African-American culture, statistics, and general information.

VIDEOS

Compiled by the American Resource Center

122 Booker T. Washington: The Life and Legacy

32 minutes, produced in 1984

Award-winning docu-drama which traces the life of Booker T. Washington, ex-slave, author, educator, and social reformer. Through location filming, reenactments, period costumes, archival photographs, and interview segments, viewers follow his career as one of the most influential educational and political leaders of his time and the founder of Tuskegee Institute.

132 New Negro

30 minutes, produced in 1956

In this 1956 program, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Judge J. Waties Waring, former federal judge on the Southern Circuit, discuss the changes in the consciousness of African-Americans which led to the civil rights movement. The discussion also touches on the role of the federal judiciary, the goals and strategy of the civil rights movement, and the role of the "white liberals," particularly those in the South.

133 Assassin Years - Martin Luther King, Jr.

26 minutes, produced in 1978

Actor Kene Halliday plays the role of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in this documentary on his life and career in fighting segregation through passive resistance. Program includes scenes from the 1955 bus boycott in Montgomery, Alabama, the Birmingham mass demonstrations and the March on Washington in 1963, the 1964 Nobel Peace Prize ceremony, the signing of the Civil Rights Bill, and the assassination of Dr. King in Memphis, Tennessee, in April 1968.

134 Legacy of a Dream

2 parts, 29 minutes, produced in 1975

This program, narrated by James Earl Jones, is a moving documentary on Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s career as leader of the peaceful, non-

violent Civil Rights Movement, which changed the face of American society. Program includes excerpts from his speeches and live historical footage of protest marches and demonstrations, concluding with words by Coretta Scott King and Andrew Young about the present day status of the King legacy.

135-6 Malcolm X - Make It Plain

141:22 minutes, produced in 1994

The documentary is based on The Autobiography of Malcolm X, written by Malcolm X and Alex Haley. A charismatic and controversial figure even 28 years after his death, Malcolm X continues to be a symbol of black anger and alienation in America.

135-12 Midnight Ramble

56:24 minutes, produced in 1994

The subject of this video is the birth of black cinema. This program combines interviews and rich archival footage to tell not only the early history of black film but the social history of that day.

140 Road to Brown

48 minutes, produced in 1990

A story of segregation and the brilliant legal assault on it which launched the civil rights movement. The program is also a long overdue tribute to a visionary, Charles Hamilton Houston, "The Man Who Killed Jim Crow." This little known black lawyer was the first black editor of the Harvard Law Review, dean of Howard University Law School, and chief counsel to the NAACP. He launched a number of precedent-setting cases, which targeted segregated education as the key to understanding the entire Jim Crow system.

141 Uncommon Images: James Van Derzee

21:44 minutes, produced in 1976

A portrait of one of the first and foremost photographers of black American life (particularly the middle class), who set up shop in Harlem at the beginning of the century and spent the next sixty years taking pictures there. His work represents a fascinating record of the public and private life of the black community.

145-3 Color Adjustment

88 minutes, produced in 1984

The image of blacks on TV over the past 40 years is the subject of this spirited documentary.

147 March

34 minutes, produced in 1963

This black and white documentary offers an in-depth view of the march on Washington, August 28, 1963. It reflects the wide-ranging participation and the sense of responsibility for a peaceful demonstration shared by both blacks and whites. The program includes preliminaries in various cities, details of Washington activities, and climactic scenes at the Lincoln Memorial including excerpts of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s speech "I have a dream."

151 Frederick Douglass: When the Lion Wrote History

84:12 minutes, produced in 1994

Frederick Douglass was born Frederick Bailey in 1818, a slave. He died in 1895, in his own Washington, DC home, free, highly honored, yet ever angry. Actress Alfre Woodard arrates this profile of the black leader. Historic writings, commentary from modern-day historians, archival art and photography are used to recall his life.

152 Last Breeze of Summer

30:06 minutes, produced in 1991

It is 1957, the same year that Governor Orville Faubus defied the U.S. Government by refusing to admit black students to the high school in Little Rock, Arkansas. In this drama, set in a small town in Texas, a bright young girl named Lizzie Davis is chosen by the African-American

community, along with five other smart black teenagers, to be the first minority students in the previously all-white high school. After the violence occurs in Little Rock, all the students but Lizzie lose heart and return to the all-black high school.

158 Question of Color

57:20 minutes, produced in 1992

This documentary examines color consciousness within the African-American community, tracing how it has evolved from slavery to the present day. Filmmaker Kathe Sandler, who is biracial, traveled from New York City to Alabama and interviewed a wide cross-section of people. We experience the psychological and emotional turmoil that the issue engenders in a college president, a mayor, a TV anchorwoman, young rappers, and others - including the filmmaker herself. Evocative footage from the 1960's.

162 Series: Eyes on the Prize

6 parts, 60 minutes each, produced in 1986

This award-winning series examines the history and struggles of the American Civil Rights Movement.

165 Boycott

112 minutes, produced in 2001

Boycott is the story of Rosa Parks and the birth of the modern era Civil Rights movement 49 years ago. When mild-mannered seamstress Rosa Parks refused to give up her bus seat to a white passenger in Montgomery, Alabama in 1955, events were set in motion that would change history. After Rosa's arrest and while waiting for her appeal, the newly created Montgomery Improvement Association decides to start a boycott of the buses. To lead them, they elect 26-year-old Martin Luther King, Jr., a new minister and recent transplant to the community. The boycott lasted 381 days and resulted in the Supreme Court ruling on November 13, 1956 that bus segregation was unconstitutional.

179 Series: America Beyond the Color Line
4 parts, 60 minutes each, produced in 2004

One hundred years ago, the celebrated African-American intellectual W.E.B. DuBois, famously identified the problem of the 20th century as “the problem of the color line.” America has come a long way since DuBois made his prophecy, and the politics of race have undergone dramatic change. So – a century later – what are the new challenges faced by black Americans?

509 Color: A Sampling of Contemporary African-American Writers

57:45 minutes, produced in 1994

This program is written and narrated by novelist and poet Al Young. The writers reading their work in the video include Amiri Baraka, Lucille Clifton, Rita Dove, June Jordan, Etheridge Knight, Ishmail Reed, Sonia Sanchez, Ntozake Shange, Alice Walker, Lorenzo Thomas, Al Young and others.

520 Achievements in American Black History - Literature and Poetry

60 minutes, produced in 1980

Abbey Lincoln and Roscoe Brown read from the works of James Weldon Johnson, Langston Hughes, Richard Wright, Nikki Giovanni, and Frederick Douglass.

530 Vision of the Spirit: A Portrait of Alice Walker

58:48 minutes, produced in 1989

This intimate portrait of Pulitzer Prize-winning writer Alice Walker explores the roots of Walker's Southern black feminist consciousness through in-depth conversations with literary scholar Barbara Christian, who places Walker in the history of Afro-American literature.

536 Richard Wright: Black Boy

86:40 minutes, produced in 1994

This literary biography is the first in-depth documentary to explore the life, work, and legacy of Richard Wright. It skillfully intercuts dramatic excerpts from Wright's works such as *Native Son*

and *Black Boy* with historical footage and the recollections of friends, associates, and scholars such as Ralph Ellison and Margaret Walker. They track Wright's development as a writer and social critic, and explore the relationship between Wright's own life and the characters in his novels.

539-4 Slavery and Freedom

30 minutes, produced in 2003

How has slavery shaped the American literary imagination and American identity? This program turns to the classic slave narratives of Harriet Jacobs and Frederick Douglass, as well as the fiction of Harriet Beecher Stowe.

605-1 African American Artists: Affirmation Today

30 minutes, produced in 1997

African American artists Lois Mailou Jones, Sam Gilliam, Frederick Brown, and Keith Morrison discuss their early decisions to become artists. Examples of each artist's work is shown.

655 Kindred Spirits: Contemporary African-American Artists

27:45 minutes, produced in 1992

Famed poet, dramatist, and educator Maya Angelou introduces this documentary that celebrates in contemporary forms the cultural past of African-Americans. A group of painters and sculptors, including John Biggers, Charles Searles, Bessie Harvey and Jean Lacy, discuss their work. These artists are linked, not by their work, but by what they feel is their creative wellspring: their African heritage.

922 When the Spirit Moves

30 minutes, produced in 2001

The program explores African American dance in history and art. The video begins in Africa where dance was central to community life. Captive Africans brought dance to America where it nurtured them through slavery. The program also explores the Minutestrel and Vaudeville stages as well as Cakewalk, Tap, and Black Bottom.

I HAVE A DREAM

Washington, D.C., August 28, 1963

When the architects of our republic wrote the magnificent words of the Constitution and the Declaration of

Independence, they were signing a promissory note to which every American was to fall heir. This note was the promise that all men, yes, black men as well as white men, would be guaranteed the unalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness....

But there is something that I must say to my people, who stand on the warm threshold which leads into the palace of justice. In the process of gaining our rightful place, we must not be guilty of wrongful deeds. Let us not seek to satisfy our thirst for freedom by drinking from the cup of bitterness and hatred. We must forever conduct our struggle on the high plain of dignity and discipline. We must not allow our creative protest to degenerate into physical violence. Again and again we must rise to the majestic heights of meeting physical force with soul force; and the marvelous new militance, which has engulfed the Negro community, must not lead us to a distrust of all white people. For many of our white brothers, as evidenced by their presence here today, have come to realize that their destiny is tied up with our destiny. And they have come to realize that their freedom is inextricably bound to our freedom. We cannot walk alone. And as we talk, we must make a pledge that we shall always march ahead. We cannot turn back....

I say to you today, my friends, so even though we face the difficulties of today and tomorrow, I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream. I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed, "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal." I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia, sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood. I have a dream that one day even the state of Mississippi, a state sweltering with the heat of oppression, will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice. I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character....

When we allow freedom to ring, when we let it ring from every village and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all God's children, black men and white men, Jews and gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual: "Free at last. Free at last. Thank God Almighty, we are free at last."

*Martin Luther King, Jr.
(U.S. State Department)*



The American Resource Center



Opening hours: Mon-Fri 9-20, Sat 9-16; Reference service: Mon-Fri 9-17
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